

BOOK REVIEWS



At long last the Korean War is receiving its just share of attention from publishing houses around the world. Here are three such publications we have received in recent months, and we commend them to your attention:

• **HISTORICAL DICTIONARY OF THE KOREAN WAR.** Edited by James I. Matray. Greenwood Press, 1991. 662 Pages. \$85.00. The editor of this volume is an associate professor of history at New Mexico State University and the author of a previous book on U.S.-Korean relations. Like the publisher's 1988 dictionary of the Vietnam War, this historical dictionary has the main entries arranged in alphabetical order with cross-references to related items within each main entry.

One example of this method can be found in the main entry titled "MiG Alley." The entry contains a brief explanation of the term as well as a series of asterisks denoting the cross-reference items: U.S. 8th Army, Chinese military intervention, Battle of Namsi, Operation Strangle, and General Hoyt S. Vandenberg (misspelled *Vanderbuerge* here but spelled correctly in the main entry).

Sixteen specifically named battles are grouped in one section, which makes it much easier for a user to find any one or all of them. The same applies to the specifically named military operations. A series of 20 maps at the front of the book is also a nice touch and a great reference aid.

The book's three appendixes contain much useful information, and there are also a selected bibliography and an index. Although the accounts of several battles are somewhat garbled and the book contains several minor errors (such as the misspelling noted), overall, it is a useful reference book. One has to wonder, however, why only two U.S. Army division commanders (and one Marine Corps division commander) were recognized with main entries.

• **THE COMMONWEALTH ARMIES AND THE KOREAN WAR: AN ALLIANCE STUDY.** By Jeffrey Grey. St. Martin's Press, 1990. 244 Pages. \$19.95. This book is the outgrowth of a historical thesis the author prepared for the Department of History, University College, University of

New South Wales. He gives us an excellent picture of one form of coalition warfare, the kind practiced by the British Commonwealth when it went to war in the mid-20th century and before a number of countries withdrew from it.

The author's principal concern is with the developing relations among the various Commonwealth ground forces, which were the most numerous of the forces committed.

Overall, he feels that despite such problem areas as financing, supply, and command responsibility, "Commonwealth military involvement in Korea was a success, if not a uniform one." And this, he argues, was an experience other nations should study, what with today's great emphasis on coalition warfare.

• **SOUTH AFRICA'S FLYING CHEETAHS IN KOREA.** By Dermot Moore and Peter Bagshawe. Ashanti Publishing (Pty) Limited, Johannesburg, 1991. 282 Pages. No price listed. In August 1950, the South African government agreed to make one of its air force fighter squadrons available for United Nations use in Korea. (At the time, South Africa was still in the British Commonwealth.)

This unit was the 2d Squadron, South African Air Force, and its ranks were quickly filled with volunteers from both active and reserve units. In fact, throughout the war, there was never a shortage of qualified volunteers for service with the squadron. In addition, the government sent a small administrative detachment—known as the SAAF Liaison Headquarters—to Tokyo, where it served throughout the war.

Thirty-four of the 209 pilots who went to Korea were killed in action or reported missing and assumed dead. Four others were seriously wounded, and eight became prisoners of war. (Of the latter group, two died not long after their release as a result of the bad treatment they had received.)

The squadron was initially equipped with F-51 Mustangs and flew these on ground support and interdiction missions for the first two years it was in Korea. Then it converted to F-86 Sabre jets for its last year. The squadron served as an integral unit of the U.S. Air Force's 18th Fighter-Bomber Wing.

The book includes a number of personal accounts in its last chapter, and also has a full listing of the various honors and awards the squadron received during the war years, including the U.S. Distinguished Unit Citation. There can be little question that it earned that award many times over.

HERO: THE LIFE AND DEATH OF AUDIE MURPHY. By Charles Whiting. University Press and National Book Network (4720 Boston Way, Lanham, MD 20706), 1990. 205 Pages. \$19.95. Reviewed by Dr. Ralph W. Widener, Jr., Dallas, Texas.

The first three chapters of this book deal with what Second Lieutenant Audie L. Murphy did single-handedly to thwart the advance of six 63-ton German Mark VI tanks and two companies of German infantrymen, each calculated to be at its full strength of 125 men. For his courage, this 20-year-old soldier would be awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor, becoming the most-decorated soldier of World War II. For the detail in these three chapters alone, this book is more than worth its price.

Beginning with Chapter 4, the reader can see how Murphy's early life in northeast Texas before the war had played an important part in his becoming a fine infantry soldier. For example, as soon as he was old enough to handle a rifle, he went hunting. As a result, he developed an uncanny knack for killing a bird or an animal with the first shot; he said, "If I missed, we didn't eat." The same was true much later in combat, where he seldom needed more than one bullet to "get his man."

The next 18 chapters show how he developed into one of the finest combat soldiers this country has ever produced. These chapters should be read carefully, for they contain numerous examples of military leadership at its very best, especially in the heat of combat.

The rest of the book deals with Murphy's life after he left the Army—the time spent writing his autobiography, *To Hell and Back*; his movie-making days; his two marriages, which are covered only superficially; and his financial ventures, most of which failed because, instead of insisting on signed con-

tracts, he trusted people to do what they told him they would do.

Throughout these chapters, we see how Murphy was unable to throw off, for very long, the horrors of combat he had seen and experienced in seven campaigns in which he was wounded three times. His misery was compounded by the fact that the soldiers who might have helped him get over the war—the group of men he had known from the beginning in Baker Company, 1st Platoon, B Company, 15th Infantry Regiment, 3d Infantry Division—were either dead or had been incapacitated and were now unable to be of any assistance to him. And he felt that anyone who had not been “to hell and back” could not understand what day-in and day-out combat was like, however much they tried.

As the author says of Murphy, “Perhaps, in the end, he welcomed that sudden, swift death the air crash offered him on that remote mountain slope in Virginia.”

A BATTLE FROM THE START: THE LIFE OF NATHAN BEDFORD FORREST.

By Brian Steel Wills. HarperCollins, 1992. 480 Pages. \$30.00. Reviewed by Dr. Charles E. White, Infantry Branch Historian.

Few individuals in American history have elicited both praise and scorn to a greater degree than Confederate General Nathan Bedford Forrest. Hailed as the greatest soldier of the Civil War by Robert E. Lee, called a devil by Ulysses S. Grant, considered a hero by the people of the Confederacy, accused of war crimes by Union loyalists, and—more recently—denounced by the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), Forrest was a violent, uneducated, ill-tempered, and vulgar man who became the most famous Confederate gadfly to harass Union forces.

Until now, trying to find the real Forrest was the great challenge for each of his biographers. In this well-written and meticulously researched book, Brian Steel Wills offers a thorough and balanced perspective of the Confederate general, placing Forrest firmly in the context of his time and removing many of the previous distortions associated with him.

Forrest was a product of the frontier, where he led a rough and violent life. He grew up farming and protecting his mother and younger siblings. Later, he became a successful slave trader and one of the wealthiest men in Memphis. Like most frontiersmen of his day, however, Forrest lacked formal education. He considered himself a man of action and rarely took the time to think things

through before plunging recklessly (and most of the time physically) into frays, regardless of the consequences.

During the war, Forrest rose to prominence as an independent cavalry commander. His war record is filled with daring raids and stunning victories, many against overwhelming odds. He became the most feared and hunted Rebel in the western theater. Yet none of this mattered.

The same traits that made him legendary also deprived him of a decisive role. He was simply not a team player. He chafed at working with others, preferring to operate independently, free to control his own actions. As a result, he was never trusted with anything more than a secondary role. And his habit of getting into the thick of the fight (as if he were a private soldier) raises serious questions concerning his judgment and his abilities as a senior tactical commander.

Forrest was not a good subordinate, but constantly bickered with his superiors. He would become angry and sullen whenever he thought they had disregarded or ignored his advice. He often ignored his commander's intent, especially when he felt that his superior was too hesitant or incompetent to meet the requirements of the moment. In short, Forrest could not tolerate actions or behavior with which he disagreed.

Forrest rarely accepted responsibility for failure but shifted the blame onto others and berated his superiors for squandering the lives of his men. He found it difficult to admit that he was responsible for any of the negative results of his own rash and impetuous actions.

Once the war ended, Forrest struggled to regain his previous wealth. He tried farming, selling insurance, rebuilding railroads, and organizing the Ku Klux Klan, but nothing yielded success. He was a broken man. All the battles of his life finally took their toll, and by October 1877, he could fight no more.

In this splendid and aptly titled book, Wills provides a refreshing look at virtually every aspect of Forrest's colorful and controversial life. This is the most accurate study of Forrest to date and is must reading for anyone interested in coming to grips with the life of Nathan Bedford Forrest.

WHERE THE DOMINO FELL: AMERICA AND VIETNAM, 1945 TO 1990. By James S. Olson and Randy Roberts. St. Martin's Press, 1991. 321 Pages. \$19.95. Reviewed by Dr. Joe P. Dunn, Converse College.

This is one of a number of new survey histories primarily for marketing as textbooks for Vietnam War courses. Although James Olson, professor of history at Sam Houston State University, edited *Dictionary of the Vietnam War* (1988), neither he nor co-author Randy Roberts is a specialist on the war. (Their previous book was on sports history.)

Although the narrative is drawn exclusively from secondary sources, the authors have a good command of the literature. The opening chapter capsules Vietnamese history from antiquity to 1945, and the volume proceeds with the standard topics. An interesting chapter on the 1975-1990 period focuses on popular culture, particularly the large number of movies on Vietnam.

The book compares favorably with similar new volumes such as Anthony James Joes' *The War for South Viet Nam, 1954-1975* (1989); George Donelson Moss's *Vietnam: An American Ordeal* (1990); and Gary R. Hess's *Vietnam and the United States* (1990). A good bibliography, chronology, glossary, and list of acronyms contribute to a very readable source for laymen.

THE BOOK OF STRATAGEMS: TACTICS FOR TRIUMPH AND SURVIVAL.

By Harro von Senger. Viking Press, 1991. 397 Pages. \$24.95. Reviewed by Lieutenant Colonel Cole C. Kingseed, United States Army.

To most Westerners, Chinese military thought has its roots in the writings of Sun Tzu, whose *The Art of War* is required reading for most professional officers. In this book, Swiss sinologist Harro von Senger condenses the traditional strategic rules and operational principles used so successfully by Sun Tzu, Mao Tse-Tung (Zedong), and Vo Nguyen Giap. The result is as informative as it is educational.

In the Chinese sense, the word *stratagem* ranges from a simple trick or a spontaneous action based on sheer presence of mind to complex, carefully planned behavior designed to deceive an adversary. According to the author, the principal goals of stratagems are masking something that is true, pretending something that is untrue, gaining the initiative or advantage, gaining a prize, encirclement, enticement, and flight. The book includes 18 of the 36 most important stratagems found in ancient Chinese writings. The remaining 18 are scheduled to be published in a subsequent volume.

To illustrate these stratagems, the author uses more than 200 examples, ranging from

a world table-tennis championship to the arrest of the Gang of Four in 1976. The result provides a key to much of Chinese thinking and represents an interesting analysis of how classical Chinese philosophy and military thought can be applied to contemporary life. Officers and noncommissioned officers will readily identify all of the principles of war included in the text and delight in the examples of their implications for military operations.

THE LAST PRUSSIAN: A BIOGRAPHY OF FIELD MARSHAL GERD VON RUNSTEDT, 1875-1953. By Charles Messenger. Brassey's (UK), 1991. 367 Pages. \$24.95. Reviewed by Major Harold E. Raugh, Jr., United States Army.

Field Marshal Gerd von Runstedt—the stoic, aloof, and senior German Army commander of World War II—has come to personify the stereotypical aristocratic Prussian officer class. Indeed, author Charles Messenger, a noted military historian and retired British Army officer, contends in this excellent book that von Runstedt was “the Last Prussian.”

In this superb study of von Runstedt, Messenger begins by chronicling the subject's long family heritage of military service as members of the Prussian aristocracy. Then he examines the Prussian Code of Honor of “Duty, Honor, and Loyalty,” which appears to have been the focal point of von Runstedt's life and is a central theme of the book. (The author mistakenly states that the Prussian Code of Honor is also the motto of the United States Military Academy at West Point.)

Especially interesting are the chapters on World War II and von Runstedt's stormy relationship with Hitler (although the chapters dealing with von Runstedt's post-1945 life may be the best of the book). The question remains: If von Runstedt was adamantly opposed to Hitler on so many issues and occasions, and if he knew about wartime atrocities and massacres, why did he continue to execute Hitler's orders faithfully and without apparent protest? As Messenger intimates, the defense of the “traditional Prussian concept of duty” is unacceptable. This excuse of unwavering loyalty to the maniacal dictator Hitler was in fact disloyalty to the German people and state.

Messenger makes excellent use of myriad primary sources, including von Runstedt's own letters, papers, and other documents. Ten excellent maps ably supplement the text, as do the 52 photographs, many of them from

von Runstedt's family albums and published for the first time.

This biography of von Runstedt is extremely well-written, interesting, and thought-provoking. It is destined to remain for some time the authoritative biography of this German field marshal. It makes a marked contribution to the history of World War II and to the study of military leadership, both good and bad.

ON FIELDS OF FURY: FROM THE WILDERNESS TO THE CRATER. AN EYEWITNESS HISTORY. By Richard Wheeler. HarperCollins, 1991. 304 Pages. \$25.00. Reviewed by Major Don Rightmyer, United States Air Force.

By the winter of 1864, even the volunteer soldiers of the Union Army had learned how to survive and make it through the harsh conditions of the winter encampments. This is where author Richard Wheeler begins this continuation of his multi-volume account of the Civil War, presented predominantly through the first-person accounts and experiences of those who were there. This book follows five earlier volumes in which Wheeler examines the campaigns of Gettysburg, Appomattox, and the Virginia peninsula, Sherman's march through Georgia, and the siege of Vicksburg.

This book covers the eastern theater of the war from early 1864 through the battle of the Crater during the siege of Petersburg in July of that year. It includes a variety of perspectives on what occurred during the conflict of those violent months from the generals at the top, Grant and Lee, down through the ranks of officers and soldiers on both sides. The frequent use of official correspondence, personal letters, and reminiscences written after the war gives the reader a “You were there” feeling. Wheeler masterfully ties all the loose pieces together with excellent narrative that moves the Union Army from its winter camp and crossing of the Rapidan River to the trenches of Petersburg. The actions at the Wilderness, Spotsylvania, and Cold Harbor are the major battles covered in the period of this book.

On the Fields of Fury will give the reader some worthwhile insights into what the fighting man experienced, thought, and felt during this American military conflict.

THE SAS AT WAR: 1941-1945. By Anthony Kemp. John Murray, 1991. 268 Pages. \$39.95. Reviewed by Leroy Thompson, Manchester, Missouri.

Books about the Special Air Service (SAS) abounded after the regiment's role in counterterrorist operations, Northern Ireland, and the Falklands War propelled it into the spotlight in the 1980s. Much of the World War II information in these works, however, is just a re-hash of the works published by members of the SAS during the decade after the war ended. Kemp, however, has used new source material as well as interviews with surviving members of the wartime SAS to take a new look at its successes and failures during World War II.

Of interest to all historians of special operations are the insights into the constant battle for independence that the SAS had to fight against the Army's entrenched command structure so they could continue their behind the lines operations against the Germans and Italians. Kemp also offers some new perspectives on the most famous of the wartime SAS commanders—David Sterling, Paddy Mayne, Brian Franks, and others.

Another invaluable aspect of this book is the later chapters, which deal with the final phases of the war in Germany and Norway, SAS operations that have often been neglected or glossed over in other works. Although he covers the subject more thoroughly in another work, *The Secret Hunters*, Kemp also gives some attention to the intelligence section of 2nd SAS in tracking down Nazi War criminals.

This work can serve as an introduction to SAS operations during the war, from the early operations in the western desert to the disbanding of the SAS at the end of World War II. I recommend it as the best one-volume overview of the subject. I also recommend it for those who are well-versed in SAS operations and history, for the new information it offers on various operations, particularly those that took place on the continent of Europe in the post-North African phase of the SAS's existence.

SOLDIER SPIES, ISRAELI MILITARY INTELLIGENCE. By Samuel Katz. Presidio Press, 1992. 389 Pages. \$21.95, Hardcover. Reviewed by Major Richard Ugino, New York Army National Guard.

Samuel Katz has presented a well-documented, thoroughly crafted book about A'Man, or Israeli military intelligence, which in 1991 became Israel's fourth branch of service. This is a book that leads the reader, from the very earliest beginnings of both the Israeli state and its military protectors to the current headlines in Lebanon. It is one of the first books to examine “military in-

telligence" rather than the Israeli's "CIA," the Mossad. As the author says, however, "A'Man lies in the Mossad's shadow while laying the groundwork for Israel's Intelligence success...its victories are not suitable for publication and [its] defeats [are] not suitable for proper explanation."

Israeli military intelligence has developed around two main themes that are seen again and again throughout its history. The first of these themes is an interchange and a constant ebb and flow between Israel's "elite units" and its "military intelligence." The author takes pains to show that, from the founding of the organization, military intelligence and "special operations" in Israel go hand in hand.

The professional infantryman reading this book will be struck by the interwoven pattern of special operations and intelligence that is seen in most of the nations of the world and that, for the west, had its beginning in the British training of these forces during World War II.

The second theme is that A'Man has had its greatest successes exploiting its greatest strengths, which are a duality of long-range reconnaissance activities and a very early and thorough understanding of signal intelligence (SIGINT). A'Man has been involved with SIGINT since its founding, and the book relates many fascinating stories about the Israeli's use of this warfighting technique to hamper and harry its Arab antagonists.

On the converse side, A'Man failed to recognize the serious threat from the Egyptian armies in 1973, downplaying the fighting abilities of their opponents. This caused their analysis to be flawed and left Israel with little pre-strike warning. This failure caused the organization to exist "under a cloud" until its help in the 1976 Entebbe Raid again raised its stature.

The reader will note with interest that A'Man, not Massad, prepares the Israeli national intelligence estimate and is the sole channel through which an integrative, intelligence evaluation is brought to Israel's policymakers. Some of the most fascinating reading in the book involves Israel's war against terrorism and the role of military intelligence in that war. The dual skills of special operations and intelligence placed A'Man on the front lines in this struggle from the early 1960s to today. (Readers will find interesting a short passage that discusses joint Israeli and U.S. anti-terrorism activities under the control of Marine Corps Lieutenant Colonel Oliver North.)

This book presents a very realistic view

of the way a military intelligence organization operates and the way it interoperates with the combat forces it supports. Although it is a valuable "primer" as a first book on Israeli intelligence organizations, it does presuppose some knowledge of Israel and its history. Yet it is still valuable to the infantry or intelligence professional and is a bargain for its price.



RECENT AND RECOMMENDED
QADDAFI, TERRORISM, AND THE ORIGINS OF THE U.S. ATTACK ON LIBYA. By Brian L. Davis. Praeger, 1990. 202 Pages. \$42.95.

PAGE AFTER PAGE: MEMOIRS OF A WAR-TORN PHOTOGRAPHER. By Tim Page. Atheneum, 1990. 238 Pages. \$19.95.

AN ILLUSTRATED COMPANION TO THE

NOTE TO READERS: All of the books mentioned in this review section may be purchased directly from the publisher or from your nearest book dealer. We do not sell books. We will furnish a publisher's address on request.

FIRST WORLD WAR. By Anthony Bruce. Viking, 1990. 424 Pages. \$35.00.

THE SUPERPOWERS AND NUCLEAR ARMS CONTROL: RHETORIC AND REALITY. By Dennis Menos. Praeger, 1990. 179 Pages. \$39.95.

THE SOUTH PACIFIC: EMERGING SECURITY ISSUES AND U.S. POLICY. By John C. Dorrance, and others. Brassey's (US), 1990. 118 Pages. \$9.95, Softbound.

ADMIRAL ARLEIGH BURKE. By E.B. Potter. Random House, 1990. 494 Pages. \$24.95.

FINGERTIP FIREPOWER: PEN GUNS, KNIVES, AND BOMBS. By John Minnery. Paladin Press, 1990. 114 Pages. \$12.00, Softbound.

CUBA: FROM COLUMBUS TO CASTRO. Third Edition, Revised. By Jaime Suchlicki. Brassey's (US), 1990. 246 Pages. \$16.95.

SPETSNAZ: THE INSIDE STORY OF THE SOVIET SPECIAL FORCES. By Viktor Suvorov. First published in 1987. Pocket Books, 1990. 244 Pages. \$4.95, Softbound.

SOLDIERS OF DESTRUCTION: THE SS DEATH'S HEAD DIVISION, 1933-1945. By Charles W. Sydnor, Jr. Originally published in 1977. Princeton University Press, 1990. 375 Pages. \$12.95, Softbound.

OTHER CLAY: A REMEMBRANCE OF THE WORLD WAR II INFANTRY. By Charles R. Cawthon. University Press of Colorado, 1990. 208 Pages. \$19.95.

THE BATTLE OF HUERTGEN FOREST. By Charles Whiting. Pocket Books, 1990. 300 Pages. \$4.95, Softbound.

NEW ORLEANS: THE BATTLE OF THE BAYOUS. By Harry Albright. Hippocrene, 1990. 232 Pages. \$16.95.

THE MINUTE MEN, THE FIRST FIGHT: MYTHS & REALITIES OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION. By General John R. Galvin. An AUSA Book. Pergamon-Brassey's, 1989. 294 Pages. \$24.95.

GOD GAVE US THIS COUNTRY: TE-KAMTHI AND THE FIRST AMERICAN CIVIL WAR. By Bil Gilbert. Atheneum, 1989. 369 Pages. \$22.50.

SCREAM OF EAGLES: THE CREATION OF TOP GUN—AND THE U.S. AIR VICTORY IN VIETNAM. By Robert K. Wilcox. John Wiley, 1990. 295 Pages. \$22.95.

THE CULTURE OF WAR: INVENTION AND EARLY DEVELOPMENT. By Richard A. Gabriel. Contributions to Military Studies No. 96. Greenwood, 1990. 184 Pages. \$39.95.

NARROW SEAS, SMALL NAVIES, AND FAT MERCHANTMEN: NAVAL STRATEGIES FOR THE 1990s. By Charles W. Koburger, Jr. Praeger, 1990. 184 Pages. \$39.95.

JFK WANTS TO KNOW: MEMOS FROM THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE, 1961-1963. Edited by Edward Claffin. Morrow, 1991. 312 Pages. \$22.95.

IN A WARRIOR'S ROMANCE. D.S. Lliteras. Hampton Roads Publishing Co. (891 Norfolk Square, Norfolk, VA 23502), 1991. 200 Pages. \$11.95.

BEYOND STALINGRAD: MANSTEIN AND THE OPERATIONS OF ARMY GROUP DON. By Dana V. Sadarananda. Praeger, 1990. 165 Pages. \$42.95.

GLORIOUS DEFIANCE: LAST STANDS THROUGHOUT HISTORY. By Dennis Karl. Paragon House, 1990. 237 Pages. \$22.95.